



Looking Back and Looking Forward

By Kerry Fink, VP/Exec Director,
Helping Seniors of Brevard

In December, in the midst of all the holidays, we will be looking back ... and looking forward! When our founder, Joe Steckler—retired Navy Captain and the person who also began the good work of the Brevard Alzheimer's Foundation—first organized our Helping Seniors nonprofit 15 years ago, he saw the need to create a way for Seniors and their families to find help navigating the complexities that often accompany aging.

As we look back on a decade and a half of service to Brevard County, we could add up all the calls (over 4,000 every year!) to our Senior Information Helpline (321-473-7770), the educational and informational events we participate in (more than 75 each year), and the Radio/TV/Print/Online efforts we have organized along the way—and consider the good that Joe's vision has made possible for the 200,000 adults aged 60+ who call Brevard County home.

For a small organization that fights fiercely and continuously advocates for the needs of Seniors in our area, we truly see this work as a calling.

Certainly, aging is “on-the-job” training, and no two experiences are exactly alike. But experience teaches us that there are common themes and patterns that emerge when we zoom out for a broader, macro view.

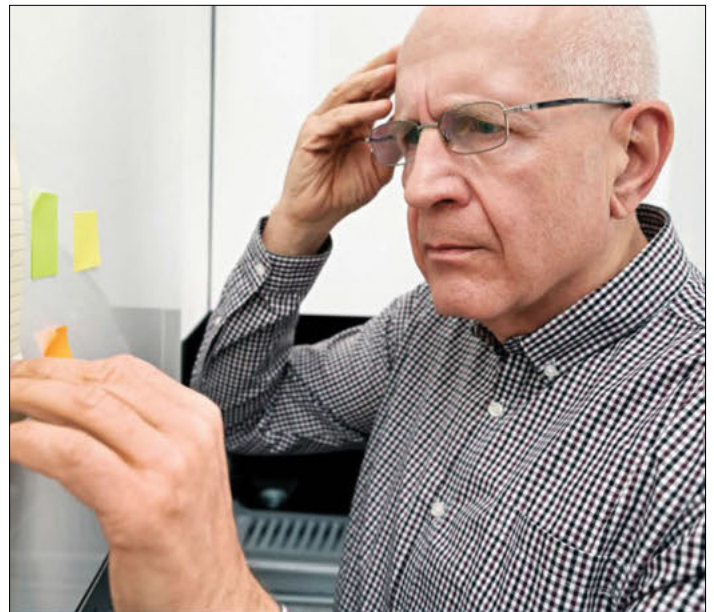
Clearly, planning ahead (“getting your ducks in a row,” as we like to say) smooths out many of the road bumps along the journey.

We have also found that another key to success is connecting with the right caring and compassionate people—subject-matter experts on the important topics we seek answers for. These individuals are worth their weight in gold and are a true Godsend as we navigate the complexities of aging.

We also see that, for almost any issue we may be working through, finding excellent local people and resources is essential. Relying on do-it-yourself computer searches or blindly calling 800 numbers we see on TV often leads us in directions that we later discover aren't nearly as helpful as we had hoped. It is far better when we connect with a neighbor in our area who is a specialist in the topic at hand and who has “boots on the ground” experience with the nuances and factors unique to our community.

All that being said, what really matters is looking ahead! There are more Seniors in our area than ever before—more people are turning 65+ and 85+ every day, thanks to advances in medicine and technology, and more are choosing to make Florida their home than ever before.

Looking Back and Looking Forward continued on pg 40



FREE MEMORY SCREENING

Feeling forgetful? ClinCloud is offering complimentary memory screenings every weekday!

- no-cost study-related care
- compensation for time and travel

Call ClinCloud today for details!



CLINCLOUD
VIERA

(407) 680-0534
ClinCloudResearch.com

They Will Never Be Forgotten: Brevard's Gold Star Holiday Indoor Tree

For the past 12 years, the Brevard Veterans Memorial Center on Merritt Island, and other Veteran Organizations, have supported a project launched from the heart. Led by Gold Star Mom, Jeanne Weaver, the stars on the tree have now reached over 20. Jeanne's painting of another Gold Star Family Tree adorns the cover of the December issue of Senior Scene Magazine. For 2025-26 she also created a spiral notebook with one page each of details about the fallen remembered on the tree.



This year on the morning of Saturday, 06 December Jeanne and other Gold Star Families will put up the beautiful indoor tree at the BVMC Military Museum. It will remain in place through mid January 2026, reminding hundreds of visitors the price of American freedom. Each star has the name, unit and photo of those who died in combat, or as a result of military service, who have close family left to remember on the Space Coast. Costs have been covered by the Good Deeds Foundation of MOAA Cape Canaveral Chapter, Rolling

Thunder FL-Chapter 1, and the Cape Canaveral 10131 Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

If you have driven by the BVMC lately, you will be amazed to see the Amphitheater and other major upgrades wrapping up construction by early January. Plans are underway near the Amphitheater to plant a live pine tree. That tree will be seen all year round by thousands and a sign will call attention to it — The Space Coast Gold Star Family Holiday Tree. There will be pavers near by for any Gold Star family to donate and have engraved their loved ones information.

Looking Back and Looking Forward

continued from pg 15

And with that, our focus remains clear: we are looking ahead to helping that next caller on the Senior Information Helpline and being ready to make a difference for them and their families. This is what matters to us at Helping Seniors—exactly as Joe envisioned. ☺

Service Flags

The term Gold Star family evolved from the service flags/banners first displayed by family members in WWI. The banner hung in a window and a star was placed on it for each family member serving in a war or conflict. If there was a death, the blue star was replaced with a gold star. This observance is still practiced today.

The Gold Star lapel pin is issued to family members who lost a service member serving in a conflict zone during war or periods of armed hostilities, as a result of an international terrorist attack or while serving in a military operation outside the U.S. as part of a peacekeeping force.

The Next of Kin lapel pin is issued to the family of a service member who lost his or her life while on active duty or while assigned in the National Guard or Reserve in a drill status.

If you are a Gold Star Family member as spouse, parent, child, sibling of a military member who died in that service, and would like to honor your loved one or share their story, please contact Donn Weaver 757-871-6576 for more information about the tree and related programs. The ancient Greeks are credited with a saying: "A soldier never dies unless he is forgotten". In Brevard County we hope to make sure our fallen are not forgotten. ☺

Weekly SUDOKU

	9		1			4		
8			4			5		1
4		2		7			9	
2		4			9			
	8	5						
7	3			4	1	6		8
	4		5	8	6			
						3	4	
9		1						

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦♦♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

© 2025 King Features Synd., Inc.



SENIOR SCENE MONTHLY TRAVEL TIPS

Checklist for Traveling Abroad (Part 2)



Senior Travel Agent Chris Morse has over 35 years travel agent experience.

Corporate Travel / The Travel Center / Senior Travel • Phone: 800-870-9345 • Fax: 805-980-4580 • Office: 321-978-5211
Email: travelcenterusa@gmail.com • Site: <http://thetravelcenterusa.com> • CST #2000881-10 FTS#: 14672

Traveling to another part of the world? International travel takes a little more organization than putting clothes in a bag and hoping for the best. Forgetting your passport at home or realizing after your credit card is frozen that you never notified your bank about your travel plans can turn your trip into a disaster. That's why Senior Travel always tells you to be PATIENT when traveling abroad.

When working with Senior Travel most of the pre-trip stress can be avoided with a little planning around the real essentials—think health, safety, and money. To keep you from last-minute concerns or problems, please look at this handy international travel checklist.

Get Vaccinated

It's best to get the necessary vaccinations out of the way as soon as possible since it can take a few weeks to build complete immunity. Some also require multiple doses, which may need to be administered over days, weeks, or even months. Consult with your doctor about receiving the CDC-

recommended vaccinations, as the vaccination protocol varies by country. Keep your vaccination certificate in your carry-on in case customs requires you to present it when entering the country.

Learn About Your Destination

Having some source of knowledge about your destination is so important. Read about the region you're traveling to in advance to gain insight into important information such as currency exchange rates, useful phrases, tipping norms, appropriate clothing, and cultural/legal customs. It's best to be prepared so you don't land yourself in a compromising situation. Your Senior Travel Advisor can help you gain important information on the city that you will be traveling to. Also, the vendor that you choose will also have important info.

Checklist for Traveling Abroad cont'd on pg 47

AudioNova



Experience the AudioNova difference



EXPERT HEARING EVALUATIONS



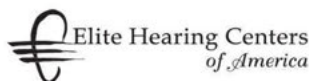
PERSONALIZED SOLUTIONS



LATEST HEARING TECHNOLOGY

Hearing connects us. When you start to experience hearing loss, you can start to lose who you are and those who are so important to you. One simple visit to an AudioNova hearing clinic can not only help get your hearing back, but part of your life back.

AudioNova



Call your nearest location today and
receive a **FREE DEMONSTRATION!**

MELBOURNE
321-425-6201

MERRITT ISLAND
321-735-4494

PALM BAY
321-327-7945

Or visit us online at AudioNova.com

the healing process, Jeanne and her husband Donn organized a dinner where Gold Star families could meet and pay honor to their loved ones. Later, the mothers would join together to do something emotionally constructive—they would create a Christmas tree which would be on display to the public during the holiday season.

Gathering materials, the group made large golden stars with pictures of their loved ones on both sides of the star. Stars were also made for the fallen in earlier wars. WWII, Korea, Viet Nam, pre-9/11 terrorist attacks, Iran, Afghanistan and military personnel who died as a result of military service.

Many thanks must be given to the members of Rolling Thunder Florida, Chapter 1 and the Cape Canaveral VFW who through the years, have financially supported the tree. The tree

is displayed in the Museum of the Veteran Memorial Center, Merritt Island, FL each Christmas Season (late November to early January) in memory of our area fallen. A sign stands next to it inviting others, who have lost a loved one to war, to contact Jeanne so that they might also have a star in memory of their loved one. Most recently, a star was added for a former MIA in Viet Nam whose body was recovered.

As a local artist, Jeanne paints in oil on canvas. She also creates Byzantine style icons with fresh egg tempera paint and 24 K gold leaf. As Resident Artist, Jeanne teaches iconography through the Episcopal Central Diocese Institute of Christian Studies at the St. David's Institute, St. David's by the Sea, 4th St. South in Cocoa Beach. Commissions are welcomed. ☺

Checklist for Traveling Abroad *continued from pg 14*

- Make Sure Your Home Is Cared For
- Stop your mail delivery
- Water house plants.
- Leave lights
- Secure your pets
- Have someone come by every couple of days
- Lower your A/C

Download the Necessities

Sometimes, the most important thing you'll pack is in your smartphone rather than your suitcase. You can find Wi-Fi in many places, but downloading offline maps through Google Maps will allow you to follow your GPS without using up data.

Downloading in-flight entertainment when traveling on a plane.

Load NETFLIX onto your phone so when you get wi-fi, you can watch movies in English when visiting a foreign country. Don't forget a portable backup charger.

Pack These Essentials

While the contents of your checked bag will largely depend on the climate you're visiting, you'll want most of your trip's

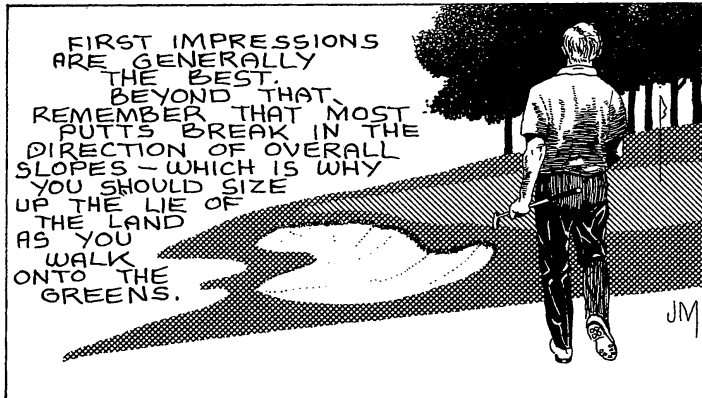
essentials easily accessible in your carry-on. Start with this international travel checklist of items to pack:

- Passport and visa
- Medications
- Insurance and ID cards, Cash, debit cards, and credit cards
- Pen to fill out customs forms
- Portable charger
- Earplugs, eye mask, and sleeping pills, neck rest
- Electrical converters and adapters specific to your destination
- Headphones
- Antibacterial wipes
- Sweater/scarf in case the plane is chilly
- Cell phone and charger

I always take photos of my packed suitcase (both inside and out) in case it gets lost. That way, airline employees will know what to look for, and you'll know what was inside if you don't get it back and need to file a claim.

* Information provided by Travel & Leisure Magazine, Cruise Critic and Senior Travel ☺

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





THE 6TH ANNUAL FOUNDATION CRUISE HELPING SENIORS OF BREVARD

Jan 24-31 2026 - 7-Night Cruise Round Trip Port Canaveral

Sail with your Brevard Friends!



Sail with your friends - and bring your whole family! Meet your Helping Seniors friends from Brevard County on the luxurious MSC Grandiosa! Make January 2026 special on our 7-night sailing to Nassau Bahamas, San Juan Puerto Rico and Puerto Plata Dominican Republic!



6th Annual Helping Seniors Foundation Cruise

**BOOK YOUR CABIN BY JUNE
30 & RECEIVE A \$25.00 CAR
RAFFLE TICKET FOR THE
FAMOUS HSOB CAR RAFFLE
& ENTRANCE TO THE
"MUSCLE CAR MUSEUM"**

Balcony - As low as \$1308 pp
Inside - As low as \$1024 pp

Outside - As low as \$1125 pp
Based on double occupancy

**Includes: Cabin, Port Charges, Beverage Package, Wi-Fi,
Gratuities, Travel Insurance (under 80)**

**Contact: Helping Seniors of Brevard Travel Club
Chris Morse 818-430-1480 Cell**



Your Senior Travel Specialist

SeniorTravel

division of The Travel Center
CST# 20000881-10 FST# 14672

Helping Seniors of Brevard is a Florida 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Helping Seniors of Brevard, P.O. Box 372906 - Seaside Beach, FL 32087. The Helping Seniors Travel Club is operated by Senior Travel division of The Travel Center. CST# 20000881-10 FST# 14672. who is solely responsible for all travel arrangements. A portion of travel committed to from Helping Seniors Travel Club Members travel funds that Helping Seniors Endowment.



THE ALASKA CRUISE HELPING SENIORS OF BREVARD

Jun 2026 - 7-Night Cruise Round Trip Seattle

Sail with your Brevard Friends!



Let's explore the Majesty of Alaska together June 2026 as you sail with your friends - and bring your whole family! Meet your Helping Seniors friends from Brevard County on the luxurious MSC Poesia for the Inaugural Alaska season. With our 7-night Round-Trip Seattle sailing, we'll call on Ketchikan, Alaska, Juneau, Alaska and Icy Strait Point, Alaska well as Victoria, Canada - plus cruising the Tracy Arm Fjord.



The Alaska Helping Seniors Foundation Cruise

- * Cabin * All Port Charges * All Taxes
- * Gratuities * Meals * Drink Package
- * Wi-Fi * Special Events
- * Travel Insurance * Admin Fee
- * Donation - Helping Seniors of Brevard

(Round Trip Seattle)

Deluxe Balcony - \$1821 pp including Gratuities
Standard Balcony - \$1741 pp including Gratuities
Inside - \$1401 pp including Gratuities
 (based on double-occupancy)

Contact:
Helping Seniors of Brevard Travel Club
Chris Morse 818-430-1480 Cell



Helping Seniors of Brevard is a Florida 501(c)(3) Nonprofit. Helping Seniors of Brevard - P.O. Box 372936 - Satellite Beach, 32937 P.O. Box FL 32937. The Helping Seniors Travel Club is operated by Senior Travel division of The Travel Center - CST # 20000881-10 FST # 14672 - who is solely responsible for all travel arrangements. A portion of travel commissions from Helping Seniors Travel Club Members travel funds the Helping Seniors Endowment.